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# ANCIENT GREECE



# Impact of geography

- \* Greece consists of mountainous peninsulas and numerous islands.
- \* Mountains and seas are the most important geographical influences on Greece.





# Impact of geography

- \* The many mountain ranges caused small, independent communities to develop different ways of life.
- \* Their size and independence probably encouraged political participation within, and war among, the different communities.



# Impact of geography

- \* Greece has many ports, inlets, and islands.
- \* The Greeks became seafarers.
- \* They sailed into the **Aegean**, the **Black**, and the **Mediterranean** Seas, making contact with the outside world and setting up colonies and trade throughout the Mediterranean area.





# Ancient Greek History - Minoan civilization

- \* By 2800 BCE, a Bronze Age civilization - Minoan civilization - established at Knossos on **Crete**.
- \* The **Minoans** sailed to southern Greece and Egypt for trade.





# Artist Recreation of Knossos





# Aerial View of Knossos



# North Entrance - Palace of King Minos





# Interior - Palace of King Minos

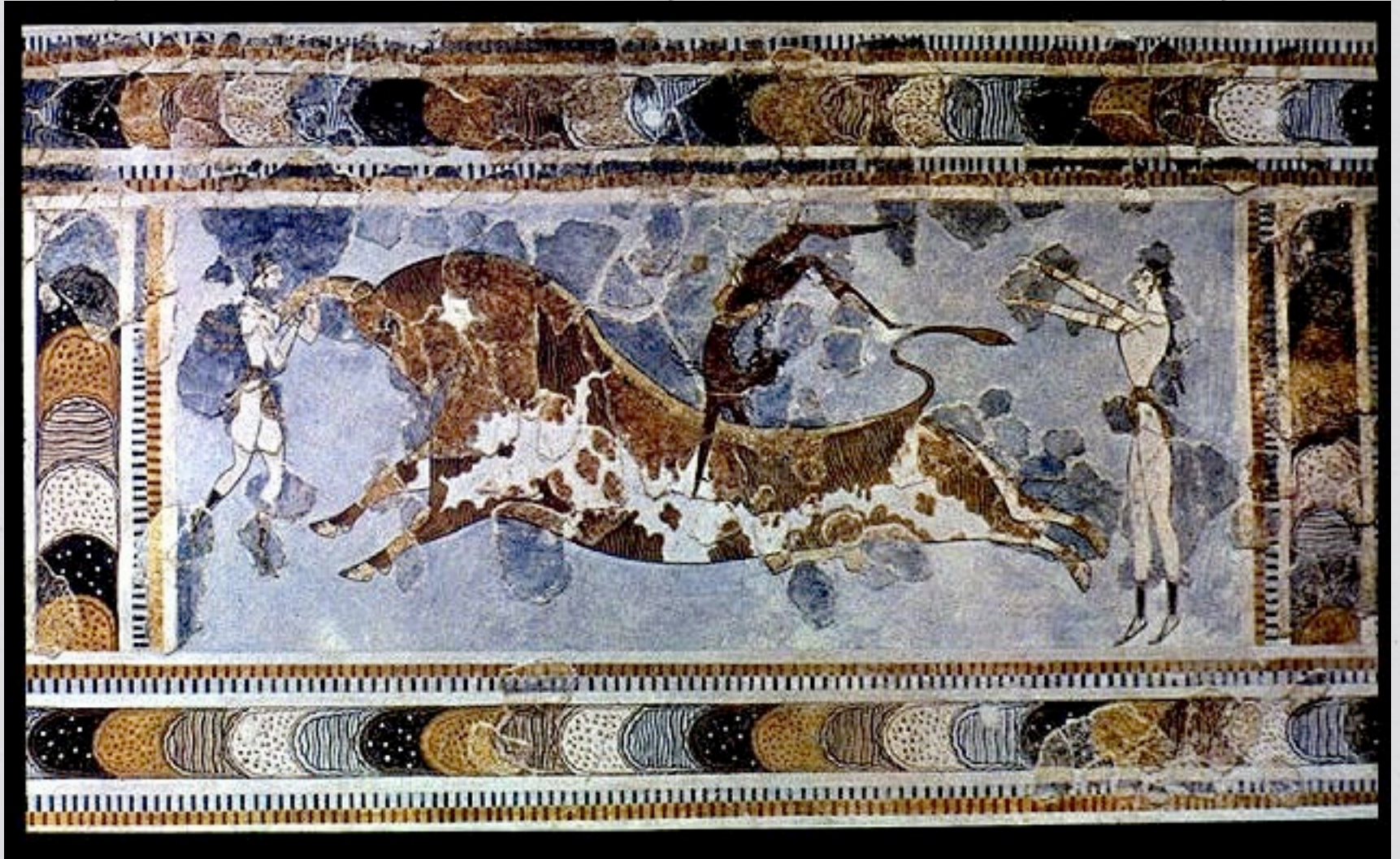


# Importance of Bull





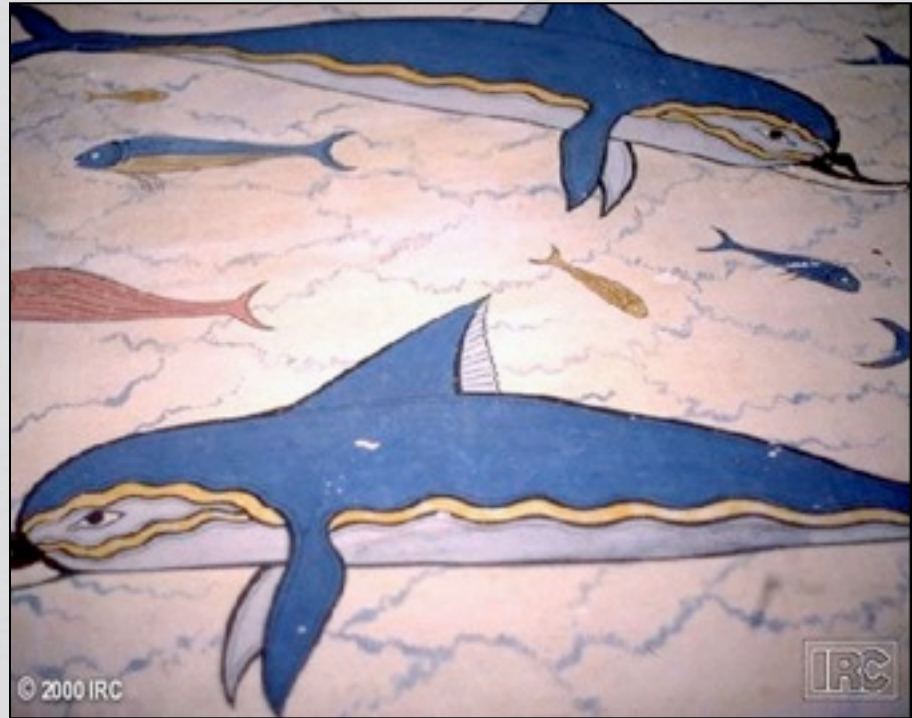
# Bull Jumping Fresco





# Minoan Artistic Motifs

Sea creatures suggest trade and connection to ocean; less about warfare





# Minoan civilization

- \* Minoan civilization on Crete suffered a catastrophe around 1635 BCE.
- \* Historians believe volcanic eruption on Thera caused tidal wave/tsunami.
- \* Others believe the civilization was destroyed by an invasion of mainland Greeks known as the Mycenaeans.







# The Mycenaeans

1600 – 1100 BCE

# Minoan and Mycenaean Civilizations





# The first Greek state: Mycenae

- ❖ Fortified city in Greece.
- \* Made up of an alliance of powerful monarchies, each living in a fortified center within large stone walls.
- \* The rest of the population lived outside these walls.
- \* One interesting architectural feature is the large beehive-shaped *tholos* tombs, where the royal family was buried.



# Mycenaeans, cont'd

- \* Unlike Minoans, Mycenaeans had a warrior culture
- \* Their murals show hunting and fighting



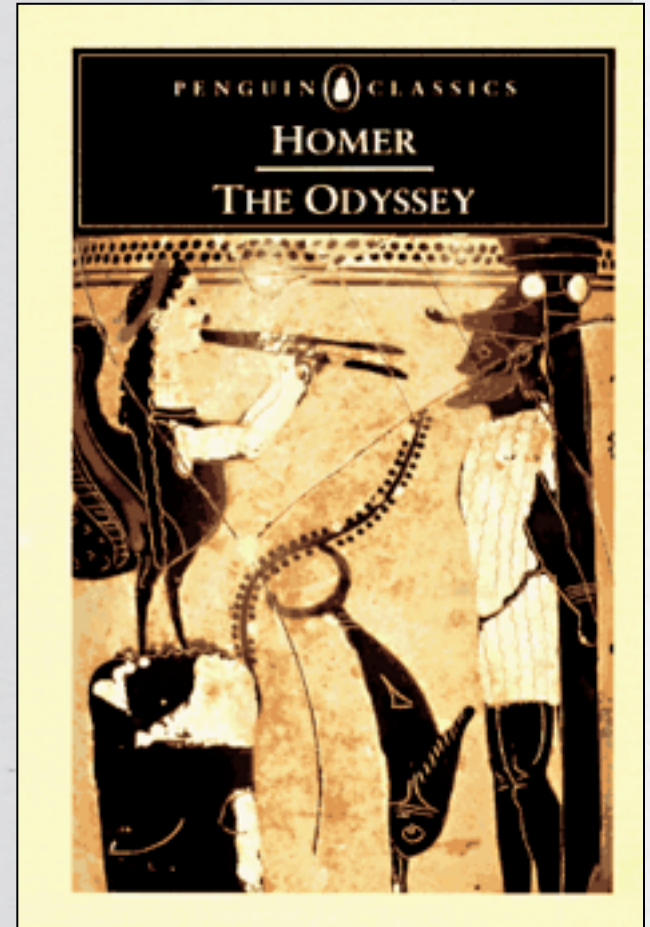
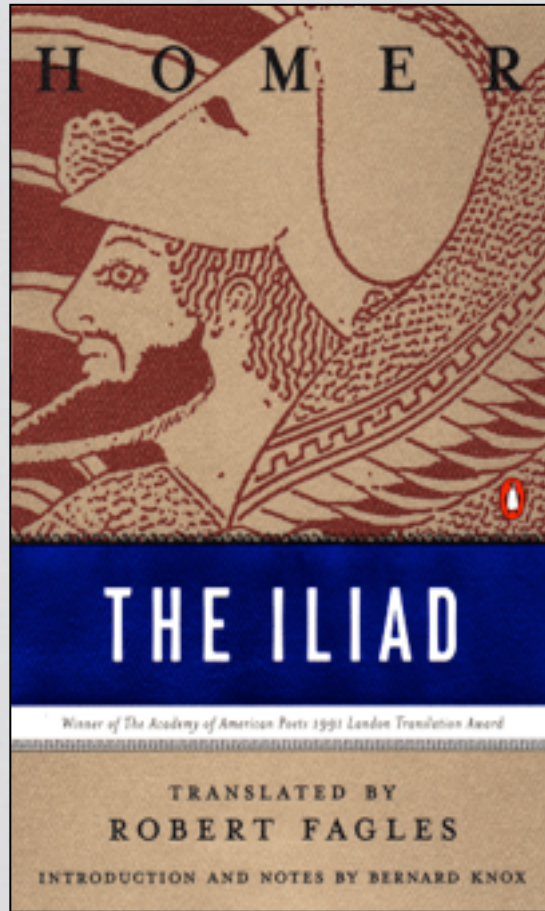
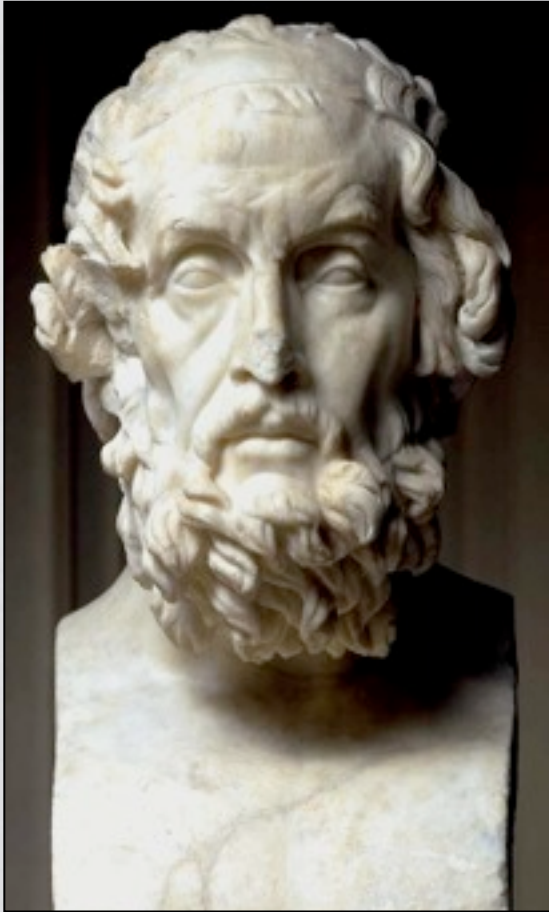


# Mycenaeans, cont'd



- \* Mycenaeans also developed an extensive commercial network
- \* Their pottery has been found throughout the Mediterranean area
- \* They conquered some of the Greek islands, perhaps even Crete

# Homer's Great Epics



- \* Most of the Mycenaeans' military adventures comes from the poetry of Homer



# Homer

- \* According to Homer, the Mycenaeans sacked the city of Troy, on the northwestern coast of modern Turkey, around 1250 BCE.
- \* An amateur archaeologist, Schliemann, later excavated Troy and some people believe Homer's account is based on fact, but no one is certain.



# The “Trojan Horse”?



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_36-H0-Vsps](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_36-H0-Vsps)



# Ruins at Troy



# Mycenaeans

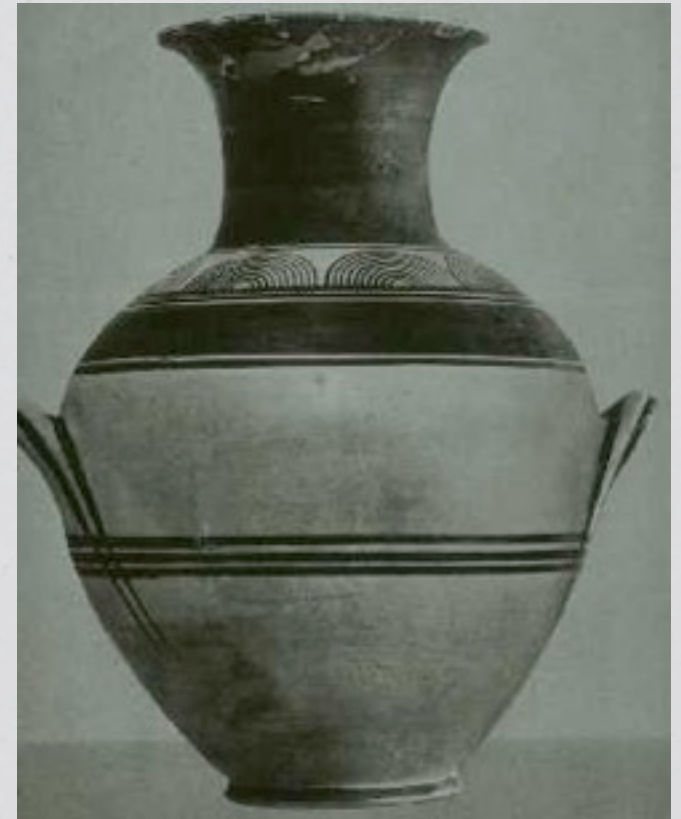
- ✧\* The Mycenaean states began to fight one another, and earthquakes damaged their civilization.
- \* It collapsed by 1100 BCE, after new waves of invaders moved into Greece from the north.





# Dark Age

- \* Period from 1100 to 800 BCE in Greece.
- \* **A “Dark Age” because few records of that period exist.**
- \* Both population and food production fell.
- \* Around 850 BCE, farming revived and the basis of a new Greek civilization began to be formed.
- \* Many Greeks emigrated to the west coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey).



# Dark age cont'd

- \* Iron replaced bronze during the Dark Age, improving weaponry and farming.
- \* During the eighth century BCE, the Greeks adopted the Phoenician alphabet, which made reading and writing simpler.
- \* The works of Homer, one of the world's great poets, appeared near the end of the Dark Age.





# The Polis: Center of Greek Life

- \* By 750 BCE, the **polis** (city-state) became the central focus of Greek life.
- \* It was a town, city, or village serving as a center where people met for political, economic, social and religious activities.



Ancient Athens

# The Polis: Center of Greek Life

- \* The main gathering place was usually a hill, topped with a fortified area called the **acropolis**.
- \* This was a refuge and sometimes a place for religious or other public buildings.
- \* Below was the **agora**, an open area for people to assemble and for a market.







# The Polis: Center of Greek Life

- \* There was no single ruler over these individual city-states.
- \* Each had its own government, although some city-states formed alliances.



Map of independent city-states in ancient Greece